



ANNUAL REPORT
2012



EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT

“MOST PEOPLE CAN LOOK BACK OVER THE YEARS AND IDENTIFY A TIME AND PLACE AT WHICH THEIR LIVES CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. WHETHER BY ACCIDENT OR DESIGN, THESE ARE THE MOMENTS WHEN, BECAUSE OF A READINESS WITHIN US AND A COLLABORATION WITH EVENTS OCCURRING AROUND US, WE ARE FORCED TO SERIOUSLY REAPPRAISE OURSELVES AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE LIVE AND TO MAKE CERTAIN CHOICES THAT WILL AFFECT THE REST OF OUR LIVES.” **Frederick F. Flack**



HAVING A HOME & RELATIONSHIPS WHERE THEY ARE LOVED, SAFE & SECURE

We often see women and children initially during a time of great upheaval – they are usually at a point in time where they need to make or have made certain choices that will affect the rest of their lives. These are choices for a new start, for hope, freedom, healing and ultimately a life free from violence in all its many forms.

The theme of our Annual Report this year is centred on **growth**. We chose this theme because we want to tell you about the many courageous women and children we work for every day. We want to share with you some of their stories of change, freedom and healing. We chose the sunflower to symbolise their journey of growth and change, as well as the role of WRISC with women and children in helping them reach full bloom; and to have what many of us take for granted – a home and relationships where they are loved, safe and secure.

FAMILY VIOLENCE is an alarmingly prevalent problem in our community affecting mostly women and their children:

- 1 in 3 women in Australia have experienced violence from a partner.
- It contributes to more death, disability and illness in women aged 15-44, than any other known cause in Victoria; it also wreaks havoc on our children's wellbeing.
- It is the most common reason why women and children become homeless in Australia.
- The number of incidents reported to police is increasing and in Ballarat has doubled over the last 11 years.

Over the last financial year WRISC was approached by 520 women seeking our help, and demand for our services continues to grow. As a small non-profit organisation WRISC faces many challenges in the current environment, but perhaps the most concerning and challenging is that current Government funding only supports 65% of the women and children assisted by WRISC.

The increased demand for our services has meant we have often had long waiting lists, leaving women and children vulnerable and sometimes without much needed assistance. As a result we reviewed how we deliver our services and what changes could be made to better meet this demand. The team at WRISC has worked incredibly hard over the last 18 months and made a number of changes so that the greatest number of clients can be assisted within the shortest possible waiting time. I am very pleased to report

that we no longer have long waiting lists and are able to respond more readily.

The unfortunate reality is there are still times when we are not able to meet all the requests for help we receive. The year ahead requires us to look strategically at how we can increase our revenue to better meet increasing demand. One of the most common things women who have received WRISC services report is that they did not know we existed and that we should promote our services so that more families know there is help available. With this promotion comes a responsibility to be able to provide the help.

I think **growth** is a very apt theme for the work ahead of us if we are going to reach the many more women and children in our community who need help to be in a safe, secure and loving home.

Jacinta Wainwright
EXECUTIVE OFFICER



We acknowledge the Wathaurong people as the traditional owners of these lands and waters and we pay respect to elders past and present.



PRESIDENTS REPORT



IN 2011-12 WRISC HAS CONTINUED TO **grow** IN STRENGTH AS AN ORGANISATION.

Examples that come to mind include:

- increased involvement of volunteers in the reception area, where they have ably supported the staff in providing a welcoming face to the public; and,
- the launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan, which will ensure WRISC continues to deliver culturally competent services to Aboriginal families.

Trends in our local as well as broader environment offer some interesting opportunities and challenges in the year ahead.

GROWTH IN REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

Across eleven years of police data reported through the Victorian Department of Justice family violence data base there has been an increase in the number of family violence incidents reported to Victoria Police, from 19,597 incident reports in 1999–2000 to 35,720 incident reports in 2009–10. This 82% rise is unlikely to represent an increase in family violence incidents occurring in the community, but rather reflects an increase in the number of reports made to police. The WRISC Executive Officer chairs the regional Family Violence Prevention Committee and our service is at the forefront of collaboration with Police and other services to maintain a proactive approach to family violence.

POPULATION GROWTH AND DEMAND

According to ABS data, between June 2001 and June 2011 Ballarat's population grew 8.9% to 148,100. This was faster than the overall growth for regional Victoria (6.4%).

While local demand for family violence support continues to be high and growing, WRISC has implemented highly effective "Demand Management" strategies to ensure women are assessed and provided with an appropriate level of support more quickly than ever. Feedback from clients throughout the year has been extremely positive and indicates that quality of services remains very high.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN'S SERVICES

Looking at the national and global arenas, there are encouraging as well as concerning signs of the times for women's organisations, such as WRISC.

Countries such as the UK are seeing rising unemployment, savage cuts to public services, attempts to unpick employment rights, attacks on the bodies created to safeguard and promote equality, and the dismantling of the health and welfare systems. Further, there seems to be a disproportional impact on women in the UK: increased unemployment, less affordable child-care, less women's services, increased tax burden for women and so on.

In Australia there are signs that we are going down a similar path as the UK. However, there are encouraging signs that women and women's organisations are standing up and seeking change. On the positive side, in Australia, the pay equity case was won by the community sector on the argument that there does exist a gender pay gap for staff in the sector. Events such as White Ribbon Day, and the "Reclaim the Night" march in Ballarat all help communicate the message that attitudinal change is necessary in order to prevent and reduce violence & gender inequality – and that it is a task that must be undertaken at all levels of society.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR WRISC?

Certainly in the current social and economic environment there is a need as well as heightened opportunity for WRISC, with other likeminded services, to continue working together to address issues of violence and gender inequity in our community. With a strong Board, staff and volunteers, we are well placed to do so.

Thanks to all those women who continue to make it happen.

Marlene Butler
PRESIDENT

"I see WRISC as a service that promotes social change." VOLUNTEER



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THE GROWTH OF WRISC

WRISC BEGAN UNDER ITS INCORPORATED NAME, THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE (CHWC) IN 1983 AS A RESULT OF ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY A GROUP OF WOMEN FROM BALLARAT AND DAYLESFORD.

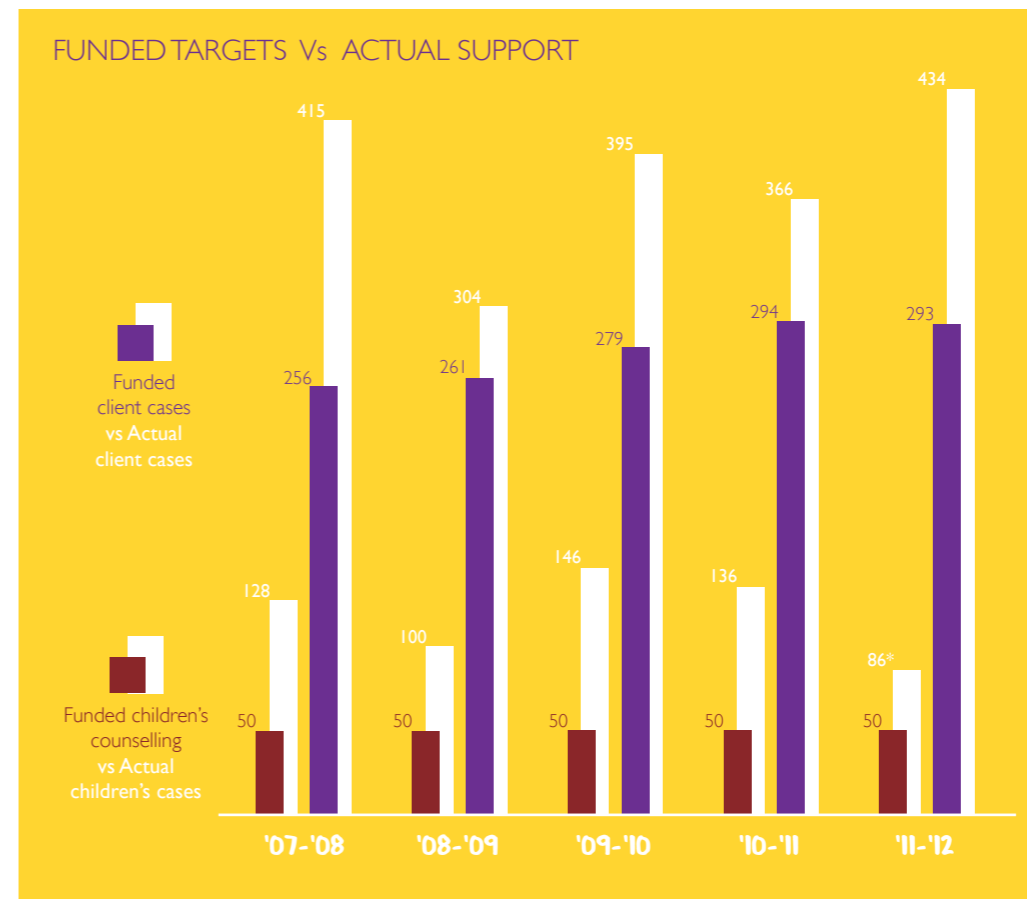
Aware that gender inequality in our community has serious consequences for women and children who experience violence in their home, the Collective conducted a telephone survey. Thirty women rang in to share their personal stories. They spoke of experiences of frequent abuse. Half the women said they were abused daily, while another third said the abuse was weekly. They also reported difficulty finding assistance and many described community attitudes they felt held them responsible for the violence perpetrated against them.

The Collective sought funding to address this serious community problem and in 1988 received funding from the Ministry of Housing to open a family violence support centre. The Women's Resource Information & Support Centre (WRISC) started with four

part-time support workers operating from what a report at the time described as a "condemned" building in Ballarat East. The service moved to Lyons St Nth in 1994, a desirable improvement from operating out of a condemned building. However, the services offered by WRISC quickly outgrew the premises at Lyons St and after many, many years of searching, the current premises at 125 Eureka St was acquired. WRISC relocated in January 2011.

From humble beginnings WRISC continues to grow. With an increase in the number of requests for service has come the added challenge and responsibility to meet this demand. Being predominantly Government funded, for a specific number of cases each year, has required WRISC to begin seeking other funding sources to be able to service the number of requests received. Each year the number of cases WRISC has supported has far outweighed the number we are funded to support. Kind and generous donations from private philanthropists, organisations and various grants has enabled us to do this. For continued growth into the future, we see this as our new challenge.

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started"
SALLY BERGER



The future below



WRISC SERVICES

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

WRISC provide women and children with information about the nature and impact of family violence and the support and resources available to them to be safe and free from violence.

PRIORITISING SAFETY

WRISC support the safety of women and children through evidence based risk assessment, planning for safety, and implementing strategies to manage risk. WRISC works closely with the police, courts, and other services to support the safety of a woman and her children.

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Given the nature of family violence, WRISC is often called upon to provide support in the context of a crisis and help women put a plan of action in place that supports her and her children's physical and psychological safety.

COURT SUPPORT

Participating in legal proceedings is a stressful process. WRISC provides information, support, referral and advocacy for women accessing the Magistrates Court and Family Court.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO HOMELESSNESS

Family violence is a leading contributor to homelessness. Many women and children are often forced to leave their home or experience insecure housing as a result of family violence. WRISC provide private rental brokerage to maintain or establish private rental, assist with housing applications in private, transitional and public housing, assist with emergency accommodation and crisis housing, and help with the costs of moving and establishing a new home.

ADVOCACY

Women and children often face many barriers to accessing help. Accessing the right help at the right time minimises a woman's distress and promotes her and her children's safety and recovery. WRISC provide strong advocacy with, and on behalf of, women to ensure access to needed services.

SUPPORTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO STAY SAFELY AT HOME

Helping women and children to stay safely in their home and local community aids in their recovery and wellbeing. It also reduces the long-term psychological, economic and social harm caused by violence. Practical assistance such as emergency accommodation, changing locks, installing security doors and lights along with other safety strategies (eg. applying for an intervention order) can make a difference to both real and perceived safety. It also enables women and children to remain in their home and maintain connections with friends, family, schools and other community support.

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Family violence is a leading contributor to psychological trauma for women and wreaks havoc on the psychological, emotional and social wellbeing of children. Each year WRISC provide trauma informed counselling, art and play based therapeutic services for children, and support groups and group art projects for women.

INTENSIVE SUPPORT

Where women and children are identified as facing the highest risk of ongoing family violence and present with complex and multiple needs WRISC provide intensive services, over a longer period of time.

CULTURALLY SAFE AND SENSITIVE SERVICES

Demonstrating respect by listening and learning, building relationships of trust and being aware of cultural differences are integral to providing culturally safe services. In addition to the services described above WRISC staff attend and participate in Indigenous community development activities such as family retreat camps, mums and bubs group and attend Indigenous networks such as the Grampians Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group. We also provide our services one day a week at the Ballarat & District Aboriginal Cooperative.

What is family violence?

Family violence is when a victim of abuse has a family relationship with the offender. This can be an immediate family relationship like parent and child or husband and wife or a relationship between extended family members. Family violence is a crime.

Definition obtained from www.shareourpride.org.au

The future belongs to th



BECS' STORY

"I have gone from fearing for my life and simply trying to survive the next 24 hours to living life, making plans and having a future."

FROM THE OUTSIDE, BEC'S LIFE LOOKED GREAT. HER AND HER PARTNER OWNED A HOUSE IN "THE GOOD PART" OF TOWN, THEY HAD 3 BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN, DROVE NICE CARS, THE FAMILY EVEN TOOK TRIPS TO THE SNOW EACH YEAR. BEC WAS FROM A GREAT FAMILY, SHE WAS EDUCATED, INTELLIGENT, AND SENSIBLE - SHE HAD EVEN GONE BACK TO UNIVERSITY AFTER HAVING CHILDREN. HOWEVER, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS THINGS WERE DIFFERENT. ALTHOUGH THE RELATIONSHIP WITH HER PARTNER HAD STARTED OKAY, IT HAD GRADUALLY PROGRESSED TO TENSION & FIGHTING AND EVENTUALLY VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.

Bec says "You picture a certain stereotype when you think of abuse or domestic violence. You think battered wife with a black eye and bruises, low socio-economic position, perhaps

even an area of the town they may live in." Bec's life didn't fit that label. She didn't see herself as a "victim" or her partner as "the perpetrator" – they were very serious words and carried with them certain feelings and attitudes. However, Bec's life wasn't as rosy on the inside as it appeared on the outside and the cracks were beginning to show. Apart from physically abusing her when they fought, there was a lot of controlling behaviour that Bec didn't initially recognise as abuse - she had no access to money, made no decisions or choices, she didn't even have a key to the house.

Although Bec had thought about leaving, the notion of actually doing it was paralysing. Bec says "I knew things were going badly for a long time, but I was afraid of what would happen if I left – that he would follow me and hurt me. I didn't have anywhere to go and staying with friends would have been risky." And through all of this Bec hadn't confided in anyone – not her parents or even her best friend.

Bec found herself at WRISC after the police intervened in her home situation. Bec still felt she wasn't an appropriate candidate and was hesitant to take up any services. After all hadn't she just had a relationship that was just "going badly"?

When Bec met her WRISC case worker she was still struggling with thoughts about how she had let it come to this? "How did this happen to me? It doesn't happen to people like me." Her case worker organised emergency accommodation for Bec and her 3 children. Bec describes that first night in the house "it was quiet and peaceful, the kids were asleep in their own beds instead of all in together, we weren't afraid...we felt safe. WRISC provided the kids and I with safety that we would not have otherwise had." It was at this time that Bec realised the full extent of what she had been living through.

Although Bec was overwhelmed with the fact that she needed to accept help, she was amazed at the care and assistance that was offered to her. Her case worker assisted with applications for private rental properties, with the financial costs of setting up a house and buying food and essentials, she continued to check in with Bec regularly to see how she was going and to make sure the children were also okay. The children were provided with counselling and programs through WRISC's Children's worker. Bec says "there was a great balance of keeping an eye on us, but it was not intrusive."

WHAT ABOUT NOW?

It is now over 2 years since Bec started her new life. She has finished her University degree and works in Psychiatric Services, she has remarried, and the children are doing really well at school and at home. She says "I have gone from fearing for my life and simply trying to survive the next 24 hours to living life, making plans and having a future. I can honestly say that if I had not left I would have become a statistic. I also feel that if it hadn't been for WRISC's help the recovery would have taken much longer and been a lot more challenging."

Finally, Bec says there is an important message that the community needs to know "Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone from anywhere, at any age, in any stage of life. We need to break down that stereotype. I was an educated, intelligent and sensible person and through no fault of my own found myself in this situation. You don't know what happens behind closed doors, sometimes even your own. We need to recognise the process and what's happening and try and help others...before it gets to the pointy end. If I had known that services like WRISC were available, I would have left sooner. I never thought I would have the chance to make plans and decisions for my future. I now have that."

The future belongs to those who b



A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES MUST BEGIN WITH A SINGLE STEP. Lao Tzu

INDIGENOUS PROGRAM

WE ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE PROGRAM AND STRONGLY BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECTING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES, AND OUR SHARED HISTORY AS INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS SINCE EUROPEANS ARRIVED IN AUSTRALIA.

Since the Indigenous program began at WRISC we have had the opportunity to grow, learn and be enriched through our work with Aboriginal services and peoples. In May this year we launched our plan for Reconciliation to build on these good relationships and to show our respect for Indigenous peoples and their cultures. WRISC has had the opportunity to employ some truly inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the program and we wanted to look at how we might develop career and other opportunities for more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. We established an Indigenous trainee position in the program and employed Angela in May this year. Angela is a credit to her family and community. She completed her diploma in community services in October and is a dedicated and passionate advocate for Indigenous women and children. We are very pleased that we have been able to share her journey as she completes her training at WRISC.

Family violence is a serious issue that affects all areas of Australian society. It is a particular concern for Indigenous Australians who experience higher levels of family violence and sexual abuse than non-Indigenous Australians. Many of the factors that contribute to family violence and sexual abuse are the same for

Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It is important we understand why Indigenous men and women are twice as likely as non-Indigenous Australians to experience violence.

The lives of Indigenous Australians today are affected by what has happened to them in the past. All around the world the impact of European colonisation has resulted in trauma for Indigenous peoples having long term consequences from generation to generation. Many people alive today were forcibly removed from their parents or had their children removed affecting their children and grandchildren. This history of dispossession and discrimination increase their vulnerability to being both victims and perpetrators of family violence.

This year two workers were fortunate enough to be invited to attend the Aboriginal Family Retreat at Anglesea organised by the Grampians Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group. From beginning to end the retreat provided opportunities to establish and build relationships based on mutual respect and trust, with the families that attended the camp. These families bravely shared their stories of trauma, strength and resilience.

The camp provided opportunities to work with several of the women, children and families to manage presenting issues as they arose and used physical challenges and activities symbolically to facilitate open and honest discussions.

Gayle (Senior Worker) shared her view of the retreat. "At times the retreat was both physically and emotionally challenging, but it was by far one of the most rewarding experiences I have had as a worker within the welfare sector. I feel honoured to have had the opportunity to learn from shared 'storytelling' and to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to be 'family' and 'community' within aboriginal culture."

Ashleigh (Support Worker, Indigenous Program) also noted "I feel that I have gained a lot of knowledge not only about Aboriginal culture, but also about myself and the work that I can do in partnership with the Indigenous community in the future."

www.shareourpride.org.au

"I FIRST MADE CONTACT WITH WRISC AT THE ABORIGINAL FAMILY CAMP IN APRIL 2012. IT WAS THROUGH THE WORKERS AND THEIR ROLE AT CAMP THAT I WAS ABLE TO SEE MY NEED FOR HELP WITH HISTORIC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. THE SUPPORT I HAVE RECEIVED PROVIDED INVALUABLE INSIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING."

The future belongs to those who believe



connection to family

country

dreaming

kinship

storytelling

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

- IN 2011-2012 FORTY FIVE CHILDREN WERE SUPPORTED THROUGH THE CHILDREN'S COUNSELLING PROGRAM
- IN 2011-2012 THERE WERE 8 BOYS GROUPS AND 8 GIRLS GROUPS
- A PARENTING AFTER VIOLENCE GROUP WAS DEVELOPED IN 2011
- IN 1999-2000 THERE WERE 915 CHILDREN RECORDED AS AFFECTED FAMILY MEMBERS (AFMs) COMPARED WITH 2,755 IN 2009-2010. IN ADDITION, CHILDREN RECORDED AS PRESENT AT FAMILY VIOLENCE INCIDENTS ATTENDED BY POLICE HAS ALSO INCREASED, FROM 18,541 CHILDREN IN 1999-2000 TO 24,180 CHILDREN PRESENT IN 2009-10. VICTORIAN FAMILY VIOLENCE



OUR CHILDREN'S COUNSELLOR, RUTH SAYS: "I LOVE GIVING A VOICE TO CHILDREN AND GIVING THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THE THINGS THAT ARE REALLY IMPORTANT AND SIGNIFICANT TO THEM. I ALSO ENJOY THE CHALLENGE OF WORKING OUT HOW BEST TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EACH CHILD AND FAMILY IN SUCH A WAY THAT WILL WORK FOR THEM. OUR INPUT CAN REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

The children's program works with children, their mums and other important people in a child's life including dads, grandparents and teachers. Mums often express gratitude, relief and amazement at how helpful even one session between their child and the children's counsellor can be.

Sadly, in families where violence in the home is occurring, children are often present during the violent incidents and many children are abused directly. Research clearly shows that this has a significant impact on children's development and wellbeing, and often results in trauma. This trauma manifests itself in many

different ways (eg. behavioural and emotional problems) and is influenced by many factors such as their age, the nature of the violence and how long it's been occurring. When our Children's Counsellor first meets with a child they are often quiet, scared, unsure and confused about what is happening both within their family and with the involvement of services, police, court, etc. Once the child has had an opportunity to talk about their situation, from their point of view and in an environment in which they feel comfortable, they often feel a sense of relief that someone is asking them what they are thinking and feeling. Some of the worries and misunderstandings they have been carrying are shared and sometimes clarified. A session with the children's counsellor can restore a sense of hope, that they are not alone and that things can and will get better.

EXAMPLES OF THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM IN ACTION:

'Hannah' started doing child-centred play therapy at WRISC. She was able to "play" out and explore some of the things that had happened in her family, as well as freely express some of the strong feelings she was holding and did not understand. Her behavioural issues and relationships with her mother and siblings improved significantly.

'Gemma' participated in some individual art therapy sessions that WRISC paid for through our private therapist initiative with similar positive outcomes for her and her family. Gemma then joined the Interagency Children's Therapy Group for girls co-ordinated by WRISC's Children's

Counselling Program, and remained in the group for a number of terms. She loved having a place where she could talk openly about experiences of bullying at school and at home, amongst other girls' who would tell very similar stories. Her brother joined the boys' group. He too enjoyed having a place where these kinds of issues were talked about openly.

In talking with the children's counsellor, another boy 'James' expressed an interest in having a one-on-one mentor, so WRISC was able to provide the information and paperwork for the Big Brother, Big Sister program to get this happening for him.

His brother 'Felix' preferred the idea of a group mentor program where children are linked with a mentor and do planned activities with a group of other 'pairs'. He was linked into Karinya's LARF program (life skills, activities, relationships and fun).

'Jayde' was worried about her mum. She joined the Interagency Therapy group and some strategies were put in place to improve communication between Jayde and her mum. Additionally, a session with mum on her own was organised to talk about her needs. This resulted in a number of things being set up for mum that reduced her stress levels significantly, enabling her to "be there" more for Jayde, (and for Jayde to worry less about her).

Note: The names of children have been changed to protect their identity.

The future belongs to those who believe in the be



THE BOARD



MARLENE BUTLER
President

Marlene Butler has been on the Board of WRISC for 3 years and currently works as a manager of

family and early childhood services at Child & Family Services Ballarat. Marlene has worked in the community sector since 1988, working with out of home care, family support, family violence and similar programs. She resides in Hepburn Shire with her partner, a three legged cat, a small but persistently macho dog and 2 feminist chickens.



KAREN MONUMENT
Vice President

Karen has been a CHWC Board member since 2004

and has been a part of the WRISC journey from "collective" to "board" from Lyons St to Eureka St. After leaving employment in the Family Violence sector in 2004, Karen wanted to continue to be a part of an organisation that works so hard in supporting women and their children in both leaving and recovering from family violence. Being a part of CHWC and WRISC has provided the perfect avenue to do just that.



LORRAINE YEOMANS
Public Officer & Secretary

Lorraine has been on the

CHWC Board of Governance since 2007. She has strong beliefs in social justice and her interest in being on the Board stems from her commitment to improve the status of women and eliminate gender-based violence. Lorraine has been actively involved in the women's movement, human rights organisations, trade unions and disability advocacy groups. She is currently employed as the Training Coordinator at Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria and has been in this position since February 2009.



VIRGINIA SCANLAN
Treasurer

Virginia Scanlon has been on the board of WRISC since 2008 as

Treasurer. Virginia currently works as a Public Accountant, but came to her role at WRISC through her work at DHS. Virginia lives in Buninyong with her husband, two children, two dogs, one cockatoo, one galah and one horse. Working with WRISC provides the

perfect antidote to working with people who worship at the foot of Money.



JACINTA WAINWRIGHT
WRISC Executive Officer

Jacinta passionately believes that everyone has the right to live free from violence and has dedicated herself to this cause through voluntary and paid work over the last 17 years. A member of the Central Highlands Women's Collective since 2000, Jacinta served a couple of terms on the WRISC management Collective and later Board of Governance. In September 2010 after having taken a break from the Board to pursue further study, Jacinta returned to the organisation to undertake the role of Executive Officer.



FAYTH ANDREWS

Fayth has been involved with WRISC for a number of years, originally as part of the collective and currently part of the Board. She is particularly passionate about the wellbeing of women and their

families and dedicates her time in support of this. Fayth lives in Ballarat close to one of her three daughters, and two of her seven grandchildren.



MARJORIE PICKFORD

Marjorie has been on the WRISC board for two years as an Aboriginal elder and she has

thoroughly enjoyed it. A highlight was the achievement of our Reconciliation Action Plan. Marjorie is married to Mervyn and they have three daughters, a son-in-law and two beautiful grandchildren. Marjorie loves gardening, sewing, knitting, reading books and going to garage sales.



DIANNE JACONO

Dianne has been part of the WRISC board since 2010. She is an advocate for the prevention

of family violence - working with organisations and institutions to raise awareness; provide evidence for commissioned research; and generally work towards change at community, legislative and funding levels. Her professional experience

includes teaching, research, technical writing, project management and administration, working in the visual arts, disability and education sectors.



PAULINE FAY

Pauline is a Community Development practitioner with over 25 years' experience working with and for the community. She

has a passion and focus for group facilitation, conflict resolution, strategic planning and strengthening relationships. With a social justice background and foundation, Pauline has worked in areas such as environmental, women's rights, public housing, consumer rights and tenancy, financial counseling, problem gambling and landcare. Although Pauline is a newcomer to WRISC, joining us this year, she brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion.

"I LIKE WORKING WITH A TEAM OF LIKE-MINDED, COMPASSIONATE, POSITIVE AND INSPIRING WOMEN."

Anita

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of



WRISC IS A WOMEN'S ORGANISATION, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS A "FEMINIST ORGANISATION". DESCRIBING YOUR ORGANISATION AS "FEMINIST" CREATES A CHALLENGE FOR ANY WOMEN'S ORGANISATION, AS THE USE OF THE WORD ALONE CONJURES UP CERTAIN IMAGES, THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES AND STEREOTYPES.

Wendy Weeks (Women Working Together: lessons from feminist women's services, 1994) in her analysis of Australian women's services describes feminist organisations as simply organisations "run by and for women". This definition in itself is what separates feminist services from mainstream welfare services. It means our highest priority is to provide services to individual women and to groups of women. We seek to support, empower and provide the women and children we serve with information, resources, and the assistance they need to make positive choices in their lives.

It also means we ask the hard question of why family violence (and violence against women in general) is such a big problem in our community and why women are overwhelmingly the victims of this violence, most often in the home and usually at the hands of a male partner or relative. We know from research that traditional gender role beliefs, attitudes that are supportive of violence (at an individual and community level) combined with unequal access to money and other resources all contribute.

We are not satisfied to accept the current state of our culture and community and we have passion, idealism and desire to see change for the better. Yes, we want to challenge the misconceptions and negative attitudes about women that contribute to violence and inequality, but above all we strongly believe in safety, equality and opportunity for everyone. We believe that violence against men is also unacceptable. Research shows that men are most often the victims of violence from other men, usually a stranger in a public place. Challenging and eliminating violence in the home, and outside of it, requires the whole community to say NO. It requires men and women from all walks of life to take a stand together to see change for the better.

The women that work for a feminist organisation are tenacious, courageous, compassionate, dedicated, and believe their work makes a difference to the lives of other women.

Working for a women's organisation is a way to take a stand against injustice. WRISC Family Violence Support claims with pride the title of "feminist organisation"!



"I feel very proud to work for WRISC because when we talk about empowering women we don't just say it. Every single worker here actually believes in it." Bree

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dream



FINANCIALS

PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT for the year ended 30th June, 2012

| REVENUES | 2012 \$ | 2011 \$ |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Government Grants | 754,072 | 760,349 |
| Investment Income | 4,586 | 7,198 |
| Other Revenue | 23,945 | 15,385 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | 782,603 | 782,932 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Salaries and Wages | 458,662 | 448,552 |
| Salaries On-costs | 39,998 | 39,041 |
| Depreciation | 37,199 | 35,010 |
| Client Costs | 38,267 | 46,490 |
| Lisa Lodge Reimbursements | 26,547 | 22,502 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | 10,668 | 16,131 |
| Interest Expense | 34,739 | 35,675 |
| Other Expenses | 118,816 | 153,064 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 764,896 | 796,465 |
| OPERATING SURPLUS | 17,707 | (13,533) |

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th June, 2012

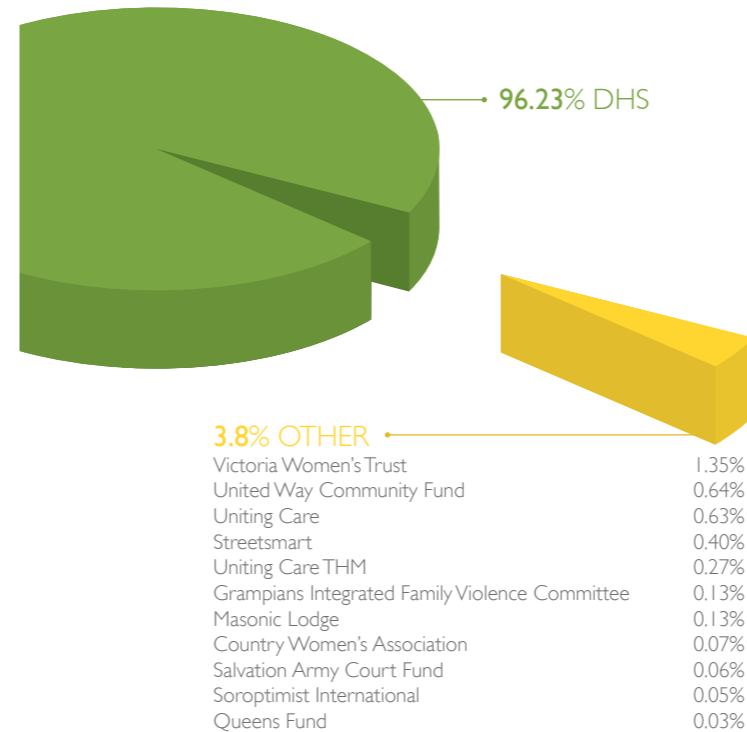
| ASSETS | 2012 \$ | 2011 \$ |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Property, Plant & Equipment | 918,666 | 934,069 |
| Other Assets | 149,262 | 144,151 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 1,067,928 | 1,078,220 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Bank Loan | 491,026 | 496,463 |
| Other Liabilities | 87,808 | 110,370 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 578,834 | 606,833 |
| NET ASSETS | 489,094 | 471,387 |
| EQUITY | | |
| Accumulated Surplus | 489,094 | 471,387 |
| TOTAL EQUITY | 489,094 | 471,387 |

Please Note:

The Summary Statements have been derived from and are consistent with the full audited Financial Statements which are available on request from the Executive Officer.

The loan from the Bendigo Bank is secured by a registered first mortgage over the property owned by the Association situated at 125 Eureka Street, Ballarat, Vic, 3350.

FUNDING BREAKDOWN



“WITHOUT WRISC'S ASSISTANCE I MAY STILL BE FEELING HELPLESS AND STUCK.”

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

Eleanor



TREASURER'S REPORT



I AM PLEASED TO
AGAIN PRESENT
THE CENTRAL
HIGHLANDS
WOMENS

COLLECTIVE FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS FOR 2012.

The 2011-2012 year has again been very successful financially for WRISC, with an operating surplus achieved of \$17,707.

I'll put an emphasis on **achieved** as it is quite an achievement to have an operating surplus in our first full year of operating in a new premises, with all the costs that this has involved. What is also notable is that in this period our income actually declined slightly. Our organisation does face financial pressures in the 2012-2013 financial year in terms of wage rises, accreditation costs, and that our funding was not indexed to the extent of previous years. We do not expect the operating surplus to be carried through to the 2012-2013 financial year.

Our thanks go to Jacinta, Anita and all the staff for operating WRISC in a very responsible manner.

Virginia Scanlon
TREASURER

"Hope sees
the invisible,
feels the
intangible and
achieves the
impossible."

Unknown

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ben Sanders at The Milk Agency Pty Ltd

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John Schreenan and Leon Wilson at King Print

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS

- Ballarat Anglican Diocesan GFS (donations of hand-made goods)
- The Queen's Fund (assistance with client costs)
- Centracare (assistance with client costs)
- UnitingCare (assistance with client costs)
- Salvation Army Court Fund (assistance with client costs)
- Country Women's Association (assistance with client costs)
- Soroptimist International Melbourne (assistance with client costs)
- UnitedWay Ballarat & The Ballarat Foundation (Specific program or project funding)
- Victorian Women's Trust (Specific program or project funding)
- Masonic Lodge – Guiding Star Lodge No: 922 (Specific program or project funding)
- Streetsmart (Specific program or project funding)
- Grampians Integrated Family Violence Committee (Specific program or project funding).

THOSE WHO GO 'OVER AND ABOVE'

- Jane Bolitho – Accounting Support
- Colette O'Donnell – Program Budget Advice
- John McCrone – ICT Support
- Wayne Dickman – Retro Cleaning
- Bruce Vickers – Building Repair and Maintenance
- Bec – for bravely sharing her story for this publication

VOLUNTEERS

- Clare Brooks
- Sonia Clements
- Sue Blandford
- Maree Ives
- Sheila Stanbury
- Leanne Hill
- Alison Crofts
- Dana Vaid,
- Melissa Collins,
- Shellee Spalding,
- Lisa Dunstan,
- Ashleigh Smith,
- Jan Carpenter,
- Kathryn Davidson
- Sue Macquet.

Temp Staff through People@Work
including Rhonda Coghlan and Kate Fellowes

Our sincere thanks to all who have assisted and supported us.

**The future
belongs to
those who
believe in
the beauty
of their
dreams.**

Eleanor Roosevelt





“Don't go through life,
grow through life.”

Eric Butterworth



P: 03 5333 3666 F: 03 5332 7778 Address: 125 Eureka Street, Ballarat VIC 3350 Postal Address: PO Box 1044 , Bakery Hill VIC 3354
E: wric@wric.org.au W: wric.org.au